

that doomed a whole nation to death ? Alva was indubitably Philip, and it was only by a transparent fiction that William was enabled to distinguish their non-identity. The distinction was, of course, a stroke of policy, but it was one that he was amply entitled on constitutional grounds to make as long as he chose to do so. Tried by the provincial charters, the government of a raving cut-throat like Alva was not the legitimate government of the Netherlands. The Council of Blood, the Spanish army, the grinding taxation, were the expedients of an enemy of the State, and consequently of the sovereignty of the State as represented by Philip. Resistance to the enemy was, therefore, no rebellion. If he could have brought Philip to accept this constitutional doctrine by force or persuasion, there would have been no Dutch Republic. It was only after Philip irrevocably stood by his ban against the prince, only after it was impossible to reconcile his despotism with the liberties for which William and his fellow-patriots risked extermination, that the " rebel" became an avowed and uncompromising revolutionist. Before this he had indeed offered the allegiance of the revolted provinces to Elizabeth or the King of France in return for an effective protection, but he was still prepared to leave the door of repentance open to Philip. It was only after the door was finally slammed by an act of solemn and uncompromising defiance that he and his followers discarded for ever the profession of allegiance to an incorrigible tyrant.

The marvel is that he and his fellow-patriots did not succumb long before this ever-memorable climax. Time and again he found himself checkmated and outmanoeuvred. Time and again his plans broke down, and he stood at bay against stark impotence. He had to reckon not only with the craft and might of Philip, but with the shiftiness of Elizabeth, the falsity of Charles IX., the lukewarmness of his German friends. His staying power in the face of the frequent *impasse* presented by the situation seems almost superhuman, and to it is due in great part the triumph of his lifework. It was this that wore out his enemy. He knew how to prevent a losing cause from becoming a lost cause until it became a winning cause, and this by sheer strength of will, sheer resource in grappling with overwhelming situations. The struggle was